

REMARKS

The allowance of Claims 1-3, 5, 9-14, 26 and 31-37 and the indication of allowability of Claims 27, 29 and 30 are noted with appreciation. However, the prior allowability of Claim 25 has been withdrawn. Instead, independent Claim 25 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,269,624 to Fred Kramer in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,619,879 to Albert Scuero.

At the outset, Applicants' undersigned representative notes with appreciation the telephonic interview that was conducted on September 17, 2008. During the interview, a proposed amendment to independent Claim 25 was discussed with Claim 25 now being amended to include recitations of allowable dependent Claim 27.

In order to advance examination in the most expeditious manner and without comment as to the propriety of the rejections, independent Claim 25 has been amended to include recitations previously set forth by allowable dependent Claim 27 in either the same or somewhat modified language. As a result of the amendment of independent Claim 25, dependent Claim 27 has now been canceled. Since none of the cited references, taken either individually or in combination, teach or suggest the apparatus of amended independent Claim 25, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of amended independent Claim 25 is overcome and amended independent Claim 25 should be in condition for immediate allowance. In light of their dependency upon amended independent Claim 1, Claims 29 and 30 are similarly in condition for immediate allowance.


In view of the amendments to the claims and the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. As such, the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. In order to expedite examination of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in order to resolve any remaining issues.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required

Appl. No.: 10/749,762
Amdt. dated 10/08/2008
Reply to Office Action of July 8, 2008

therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



Guy R. Gosnell
Registration No. 34,610

Customer No. 000067141

ALSTON & BIRD LLP

Bank of America Plaza

101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000

Charlotte, NC 28280-4000

Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000

Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

ELECTRONICALLY FILED USING THE EFS-WEB ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM OF THE
UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE ON October 8, 2008 by Gwen Frickhoeffer.

LEGAL02/30953639v1